News release

Met Office at SNP conference

10 October 2006

Climate change is happening. For Scotland, many of the long-term investment decisions that are being made will need to take the impact of climate change into account. This is the message that the Met Office is taking to the SNP conference in Perth this week.

Renewable energy is one such key issue, with Scotland the focus for the search for alternative fuels - amongst them biomass power stations, hydro-electric power and harnessing the power of the tides.

But climate change is a complex issue and there are few easy answers. For example, low summer rainfall could severely limit tree growth, impacting upon carbon-neutral power generation using pine-wood fuel. There are also questions about how sea-level rise will affect our ability to harness tidal power. These are just some of the questions that climate research needs to address.

Met Office Hadley Centre scientists seek the answer to many of these questions and are at the forefront of climate research in the UK and globally. Climate change is the focus of the Met Office's participation at the conference.

The Met Office is also at the British Wind Energy Association conference in Glasgow this week, advising on the service it can provide to the renewable energy industry. It is important to have an understanding of how climate change will affect seasonal weather patterns in the future and whether there will be sufficient wind to supply an increasing power demand. Met Office experts will be on-hand to help answer these questions.

Notes to Editors

The Met Office in Aberdeen provides warnings for Scotland as part of the National Severe Weather Warnings Service and Public Weather Service Scripts for media. It is also the UK centre for commercial marine forecasting.

There are two Public Weather Service consultants serving Scotland based in Edinburgh, giving advice and assistance on weather-related issues. They work with public sector partners within the Civil Contingencies Act and the general public to mitigate negative impacts of the weather.

The British Wind Energy Association (BWEA) conference at the SECC in Glasgow runs from 10-12 October.

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